

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 /075 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6688

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 1900

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NG, FR

SUBJ: UHANTCHE COMMENTS ON SECURITY ASPECTS OF DAKAR CONFERENCE

1. IN WAKE OF DAKAR CONFERENCE, NIGER IS PLAYING DOWN ANY SUGGESTION OF NEW INVOLVEMENT WITH FRENCH IN SECURITY FIELD. KOUNTCHE HAS AT SAME TIME AFFIRMED INTENTION TO SIGN NON-USE OF FORCE (NUF) AND NON-AGGRESSION AGREEMENT WITH DEAO STATES AT THAT ORGANIZATION'S NEXT SUMMIT.

2. KOUNTCHE'S PRESS CONFERENCE ON RETURN FROM DAKAR INCLUDED DISCUSSION OF GISCARD'S ENDORSEMENT OF QUOTE RIGHT OF EACH AFRICAN STATE TO SECURITY WITHIN ITS BORDERS UNQUOTE. AFTER REFERRING TO PROBLEM OF ZAIRE AND GROWING INSECURITY OF AFRICA IN GENERAL, KOUNTCHE LAUNCHED INTO DISCUSSION OF SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS WITH FRANCE, NOTING CLEAR DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEFENSE AGREEMENTS WHICH LINK SOME DAKAR PARTICIPANTS WITH

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FRANCE AND COOPERATION ACCORDS LIKE NIGER'S UNDER WHICH FRANCE FURNISHES TECHNICIANS, SUPPLIESHBUJ JAINING. PRESIDENT SAID SECURITY DECISIONS ARE QUOTE ACT OF SOVEREIGNTY UNQUOTE AND ALLUDED TO EXPULSION OF FRENCH GARRISON IN NIAMEY IN 1974 WHICH SET STAGE FOR NEW ARMS LENGTH POLICY WITH FRENCH ON SECURITY COOPERATION. PRESIDENT LEFT NO DOUBT THAT

SUCH AN QUOTE INDEPENDENT UNQUOTE STANCE WITH PARIS WOULD CONTINUE. PRESIDENT ADDED NEVERTHELESS THAT NIGER INTENDS TO ENTER INTO NUF AND NON-AGGRESSION PACT WITH CEAO PARTNERS AT NEXT SUMMIT MEETING.

3. EDITORIAL INSAHEL APRIL 26 SUPPLEMENTS PRESIDENT'S REMARKS WITH CATEGORICAL STATEMENT THAT GON HAS NO INTENTION OF ENTERING INTO DEFENSE ACCORDS WITH FRANCE OR FOR THAT MATTER WITH CEAO ASSOCIATES. EDITORIAL ARGUES THAT NUF AND NON-AGGRESSION ACCORDS ARE NOT SAME AS DEFENSE AGREEMENTS AND SAYS THAT WHEN ADOPTED BY CEAO THEY WOULD MERELY CONFIRM UNDERTAKINGS WHICH ALREADY WRIST BETWEEN MEMBERS OF ECOWAS (SIC) AND SIGNATORIES OF OAU CHARTER. EDITORIAL STRESSES NIGER'S DESIRE FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL ITS NEIGHBORS AND SAYS NUF WOULD NOT THREATEN OTHERS WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF CEAO.

4. COMMENT. WITH NIGER'S FRENCH CONNECTION AMPLY VISIBLE RECENTLY AS RESULT OF ENDORSEMENT OF AID TO ZAIRE AND ATTENDANCE AT DAKAR SUMMIT, IT DOES NOT SEEM SURPRISING TO SEE DENIAL THAT NEW DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS WITH FRANCE IN PROSPECT AND OFFICIAL ASSURANCES OF NIGER'S DESIRE MAINTAIN CORDIAL TIES WITH NON-FRANCOPHONE NEIGHBORS. WHATEVER ITS PUBLIC POSTURE, HOWEVER, GON'S BILATERAL MILITARY TIES WITH FRANCE ARE IN FACT FLOURISHING AS UNDERSCORED BY DELIVERY AND DISPLAY APRIL 15 OF SIX PANHARD PERSONNEL CARRIERS WHICH ARE PART OF RECENT CASH PURCHASE OF TWENTY-FOUR SUCH VEHICLES FOR NIGERIAN ARMY. NIGER'S WILLINGNESS TO ENTER INTO NUF WITH CEAO PARTNERS, ALTHOUGH CONFIDENTIAL

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PERHAPS A SYMBOLIC GESTURE, IS ANOTHER CLEAR INDICATION OF KOUNTCHE REGIME'S APPREHENSIONS ABOUT REGIONAL SECURITY PROBLEMS. END COMMENT. JAMES

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